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For exchange of information
on nutrition programs
and activities

NUTRITION

PROGRAM

NEWS

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I. NUTRITION PROGRAMS OF ICNE MEMBER AGENCIES

Nutrition activities originating from the Federal Agencies are many and varied. In the hope of making it easier for readers to gain help, information, and advice from agencies with nutrition responsibilities, we are presenting in this issue of "Nutrition Program News" a list of some, but not all, of the nutrition oriented Federal programs.

As part of the preparation for the 1971 National Nutrition Education Conference, members of the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education were asked to prepare an account of the nutrition activities and programs of their agencies.

In the limited space which could be allowed for each report, agencies were able to note some, but not necessarily all, of their nutrition activities.

The member accounts, distributed at the November 1971 Conference and included in the forthcoming Proceedings of the Conference, are presented below.

Readers who wish to contact any of the agencies should send inquiries to the Washington, D.C., agency as titled.

United States Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Research Service, Consumer and Food Economics Research Division.—The Division is responsible for a national program of basic and applied research designed to improve diets, levels of living, and home management practices of families.

The *Family Economics Branch* conducts periodic surveys to determine food, housing, clothing, and other family expenses.

The *Food Consumption Branch* surveys food consumption and food management practices of families and individuals and appraises nutritional adequacy of their diets.

The *Food and Diet Appraisal Branch* develops source materials for use in evaluating and improving dietary levels. Its "Food Composition" section is responsible for providing reference values for the nutrient content of foods. "Interpretation of Research for Applied Programs" section develops dietary guidance materials including the Daily Food Guide. The "Nutrition Programs Service" section applies research findings to nutrition education programs and publishes the periodical "Nutrition Program News." The "Consumer Use of Foods" section develops guidelines on food buying, preparation, and preservation.

Agricultural Research Service, Human Nutrition Research Division.—Headquarters and most laboratory facilities are located at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland. A laboratory for metabolic studies, primarily concerned with mineral nutrition, was recently opened on the campus of the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks.

The goal of the research program is to provide a sound basis for dietary recommendations for normal individuals throughout their lives. The program includes: (1) establishing criteria for desirable diet patterns and determining which foods meet these needs through the study of human nutritional requirements for carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins, and minerals; (2) determining the functions and physiological utilization of nutrients in foods; (3) characterizing the forms, properties, biological availability, and nutritional usefulness of the various nutrients as they occur naturally in foods, and as they change through processing and preparation; (4) appraising the nutritional state and the response to various nutrients in the diet of selected population groups.

Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS)—administers the cooperative experiment station, forestry,

and land-grant college funds provided through Federal grants. Interdisciplinary teams of scientists are supported from the Regional Research Fund (RRF) and other sources to accomplish objectives on cooperative projects.

The technical staff of CSRS reviews proposed research and research in progress, gives leadership in planning and coordinating the research, and encourages the establishment and maintenance of cooperation by and between the States and between States and Federal agencies. The automated Current Research Information System (CRIS) serves as an inventory of the more than 20,000 State and Federal agricultural and forestry research projects for planning and coordination needs. CSRS also publishes a quarterly journal, *Agricultural Science Review*, which contains commentary on published research, research in progress, and research trends. A handbook of professional workers in State agricultural experiment stations and other cooperating State institutions is revised and distributed annually, as well as an annual report on the status of funds for research.

Extension Service, Home Economics, Extension Nutrition.—Extension Service nutritionists cooperate with other government and private agencies in formulating, planning and coordinating educational work for food and nutrition programs.

They give leadership to the State Extension services in developing and evaluating nutrition education programs involving professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers. They keep State specialists informed of developments in nutrition education through newsletters and field visits.

More than 3,100 Extension home economists and nutrition specialists across the country are providing education to improve the diets of individuals and families. Their priority audiences include those most likely to have poor diets—school children, adolescents, young homemakers, and the elderly.

Special effort is now concentrated on reaching the poor and near-poor through Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. More than 10,000 nutrition program aides are working with adults and youth in this program, in the 50 States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands.

Extension Service nutritionists consult with specialists in USDA and other government agencies, professional societies, and business groups on education trends and developments, and to plan for preparation of educational materials.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)—was established August 8, 1969 to administer the Federal food programs in cooperation with State agencies.

Food Stamp Program: Coupons are provided to supplement the food purchasing power of eligible low-income

households, and thus to improve the diets of the people taking part in the program.

Food Distribution Programs: Food is donated to improve the diets of school children and needy persons in households and charitable institutions.

Child Nutrition Programs include:

1. *National School Lunch Program* provides assistance of cash and food to public and nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under operating nonprofit school lunch programs meeting established nutritional standards.

2. *School Breakfast Program* provides cash and food to assist schools in operating nonprofit breakfast programs.

3. *Equipment Program* provides cash assistance to supply schools, especially in low-income areas, with equipment for the storage, preparation, transportation, and service of food to children.

4. *Special Food Service Program* provides cash, food, and equipment assistance to nonprofit service institutions for furnishing nutritious meals to preschool and school age children on both a year-round and summer day-care basis.

5. *Special Milk Program* provides cash assistance to increase the consumption of fluid milk by children in non-profit schools of high school grade and under and in other institutions devoted to the care and training of children.

Economic Research Service.—The involvement of ERS in dealing with nutrition problems occurs mainly through its Nutrition and Agribusiness Group. This group provides technical services to the Agency for International Development, both in Washington and in its missions abroad, in planning, executing, and evaluating projects aimed at improving nutritional status in developing countries. Through its activities, the Nutrition and Agribusiness Group encourages the application of modern developments in food science and technology to innovative programs of nutrition improvement. It has assisted in planning field trials of amino acid fortification of wheat in Tunisia, rice in Thailand, and corn in Guatemala, and of protein supplementation of cassava in Brazil. It encourages and assists the efforts of U.S. and foreign private industry aimed at developing low-cost protein foods such as soft drinks, infant weaning foods, textured protein products, and fortified pastas. Major ongoing projects include:

1. Evaluation of consumer acceptability of the blended cereal food CSM (corn-soy-milk) distributed under the Food for Peace Program;
2. Study of overall rural development approaches which include nutrition improvement as an indispensable component;
3. Evaluation of the nutritional impact of the Green Revolution;
4. Assisting initiatives to further nutrition improvement through cereal breeding and/or fortification.

United States Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service.—The National Marine Fisheries Service is engaged in a program, which consists of several phases, to provide basic and applied information on the use of fish and shellfish as food for humans. Included in this research program are studies on methods of processing seafoods into wholesome, nutritious, and acceptable products; studies on the nutrient content and nutritional properties of most fish, shellfish, and fishery products. Basically, the objective of this work is to develop nutritional information for the consumer on the role of seafoods in nutritionally balanced diets.

Methods of preparing and using seafoods are also receiving attention. Institutional and home recipes have been developed to inform consumers how seafoods can provide eating enjoyment as well as good nutrition. These have been published in colorful and informative booklets that describe how various forms of fish and shellfish can be prepared.

United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Office of Child Development, Bureau of Head Start and Child Service Program—operates Project Head Start, a comprehensive child development program, which meets the total needs of the preschool children it serves, namely, nutritional, medical and dental, educational, psychological, social services, parent participation, and volunteer services. Head Start also funds 33 Parent and Child Center programs for families having at least one child under three years of age.

The Project Head Start Nutrition Kit contains seven nutrition publications designed to serve as guidelines and provide information supporting each facet of the Head Start Nutrition and Food Program. Currently 415,800 children—four, five and six years of age—are enrolled in full year all-day and/or half-day programs and in summer programs.

Head Start is part of the new Office of Child Development (OCD) which in 1969 was the most recent addition to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). The director, Dr. Edward Zigler, reports directly to the Secretary of HEW.

Under the authorizing legislation of the Children's Bureau, an OCD division, the agency investigates and reports "upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people."¹

¹ 1912 legislation

Office of Education, Bureau of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, Division of Vocational and Technical Education, Home Economics Education Unit.—National leadership is provided to home economics education personnel in State departments of education and teacher education institutions to develop nutrition education programs as a part of consumer and homemaking educational programs offered to approximately 2½ million secondary, postsecondary, and adult students under the auspices of the public schools. The study of food and nutrition is included as an integral part of the curriculum which prepares for the responsibilities of homemaking, and specialized courses are offered to those interested in nutrition for the individual and/or family. Included in the courses are the study of the significance of food as related to nutrition and good health; cultural, psychological, and physiological influences on eating habits; principles of consumer economics as applied to selecting food in the market-place; management, including planning, preparing and serving food for families with differing needs, styles of life, and resources available. All instructional programs are adapted to the needs of the students enrolled with particular attention being given to reaching individuals and families in depressed rural and inner-city areas.

Office of Education, Office for Nutrition and Health Services.—The Office of Education this year initiated a program of Demonstration Projects in School Health and Nutrition Services for Children from Low-Income Families.

The purpose of the program is to demonstrate a variety of ways through which the gap between needs and delivery of nutrition and health services can be narrowed by coordinating, focusing, and utilizing existing health, health related and educational resources at the local level, especially federally funded programs. Thus, nutrition services, provided mainly through USDA child nutrition programs, and nutrition education and training are components of the demonstration projects. The eight grantees which received funds for this school year are local education agencies in New York City; Norfolk, Va.; Durham, North Carolina; Beaufort, South Carolina; Galveston, Texas; Topeka, Kansas; Dayton, Ohio; and Oakland, California.

Each demonstration effort reaches up to 1500 children in two to four elementary schools. It is expected that over the next five years the program will support a total of 20 projects for up to 3 years each.

Public Health Service, Food and Drug Administration (FDA)—enforces Federal laws requiring that foods are safe, pure and wholesome and are honestly and informatively labeled and packaged. Examples of current programs in foods and nutrition:

1. *Nutrition Labeling*—Three methods of expressing nutritional quality of foods on the label are being tested in several cities as part of a program to help consumers select nutritious diets. (See *Federal Register*, Vol. 36, No. 224, November 19, 1971.)
2. *Nutritional Guidelines*—Nutritional quality standards are being developed for processed foods. The first in a series of guidelines has been published as a proposal for precooked frozen convenience "heat and serve" dinners. (See *Federal Register*, Vol. 36, No. 247, December 23, 1971.) The next proposal for main dish products will be published in 1972.
3. *Proposed Improvement of Nutrient Levels of Enriched Foods*—In an effort to alleviate recognized existence of widespread iron deficiency anemia in the United States, it has been proposed that iron enrichment levels in bread and flour be significantly increased. Amounts of the nutrients calcium, thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin presently provided for would also be changed to make it easier to prepare enriched bread and significantly fortified nonstandardized bakery products from enriched flour. The new enrichment levels for flour would also apply to farina. (See *Federal Register*, Vol. 36, December 3, 1971.) The period for comments regarding this proposal was extended to May 1, 1972.

Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, Center for Disease Control, Nutrition Program.—The purpose of the Nutrition Program is to identify nutritional problems as they relate to human health and to promote, develop, and educate in corrective and preventive programs. The focus of current programs is on projects designed to assess and improve nutritional status as well as provide methods for implementation of fundings.

Long-range objectives include: (1) the development of an intelligence system to identify and monitor nutritional needs of high-risk groups; (2) the establishment of an information exchange to prepare and disseminate selected technical reviews and bibliographical information; (3) the development of nutrition manpower, e.g., through continuing education; and (4) the establishment of guidelines and standards relating to nutritional health.

Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, Community Health Service.—Promotion of nutrition services in comprehensive health care in hospitals, nursing homes and home health agencies is an ongoing effort of CHS. "A Guide to Nutrition in Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged," has recently been revised and is available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, GPO, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price \$1.75.

Other components of CHS administer a variety of grant

programs which seek to improve health care for certain disadvantaged population groups. Examples of operating or potential nutrition services under these programs follow:

- Diet counseling services to patients and their families are provided by dietitians and/or nutritionists in many of the comprehensive health centers supported by CHS.
- Several demonstration projects are exploring a variety of approaches to nutrition services that are responsive to problems of poor families of Appalachia.
- New guidelines for projects for health services for agricultural migrants deal with provision of nutrition education services to agricultural migratory workers and their families.

Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, Indian Health Service.—Responsibility for the health needs of the American Indian and the Alaska Native, the first Americans, has given the Indian Health Service the unique opportunity of planning and implementing one of the most comprehensive community health care programs in this country. About 465,000 Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts receive a full range of curative, preventive and rehabilitative health services, including hospitalization.

The Nutrition and Dietetics Branch of the Indian Health Service coordinates in one program its responsibilities for:

- 1) extensive preventive community nutrition services for Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts, and
- 2) administration of the dietary departments (including staff consultation and inservice training and patient education) in the 51 Indian Health Service hospitals for this population.

The Nutrition and Dietetics Branch also conducts two year-long training programs for Indians and Alaska Natives: one for food service supervisors and the other for nutrition technicians.

Indian Health Service nutritionists, dietitians, trained nutrition technicians and trained food service supervisors work as members of the total health team in combating the high incidence of malnutrition and nutrition related health problems in the Indian and Alaska Native population.

Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, Maternal and Child Health Services.—A large proportion of the approximate 1,000 nutritionists and dietitians delivering nutritional care in State and local health agencies and projects are being supported by Maternal and Child Health Services funds.

This support is part of a four-pronged nutritional effort underway by the Maternal and Child Health Services (Health Services and Mental Health Administration) in carrying out its basic role of promoting the health of

mothers and children. This role relies on the premise that nutritional care is an integral component of health services for mothers, children and for families.

Here are the four areas in which Maternal and Child Health Services nutrition efforts are most pronounced:

1. Providing technical assistance to Federal, State and local health agencies, other public agencies and professional and voluntary organizations.

2. Fact-finding and support of research to determine nutritional needs, problems, and approaches to delivery of services.

3. Developing standards and guidelines to maintain high quality of care in such settings as comprehensive health programs, group care facilities such as day care, hospitals, and residential settings.

4. Developing and supporting graduate training in public health and maternal and child nutrition as well as furthering training opportunities for nutrition personnel and other disciplines involved in the delivery of maternal and child health services.

Health Services and Mental Health Administration, National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Health Examination Statistics.—Conducts examinations to obtain data from probability samples of the Nation's civilian, noninstitutional population, by using mobile clinics with teams of doctors, dentists, nurses, dietary interviewers and other technical staff; analyzes and interprets data on prevalence of selected objectively defined illnesses and provides data related to health and nutrition; conducts research on the quality and reliability of the data and on the methodology and techniques used.

The current Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HANES) was begun in April 1971. During a two year period 30,000 persons will be selected for examination to measure the nutritional status of the U.S. population between the ages of 1 and 74 and to obtain further information on the health status and medical care needs of those between 25 and 74.

Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases—has major interest in basic research and clinical studies in: collagen diseases including rheumatoid arthritis, dermatology, diabetes, endocrinology, gastroenterology, hematology, metabolism and metabolic diseases, nutrition, orthopedics and urology including renal disease. NIAMD responsibilities can be described as encompassing investigation of the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis and treatment of specific diseases within these areas of whatever time period of life they may occur. The total program of research support necessarily includes studies of a very fundamental nature.

The overall mission of the National Institutes of Health

is the advancement of the health and well-being of the American people. To this mission, the National Institutes of Health administers through its three major component parts—(a) the Research Institutes; (b) the Bureau of Health Professions Education and Manpower Training; and (c) the National Library of Medicine—a broad spectrum of grant programs including research project grants, training grants, fellowships, research carrier program awards, general research support grants, special research resource grants, construction grants, and scholarships and loans to students to enable them to undertake health service careers. The National Institutes of Health also offers support for symposia, workshops and other meetings to aid in the dissemination of information of benefit to medical scientists and practitioners.

Social and Rehabilitation Service—enables America's vulnerable and handicapped people—those physically and mentally disabled, the aging, children and youth, and impoverished families—to move from dependency, alienation, and deprivation toward independence, constructive contributions to society, and realization of their individual potentials.

In partnership with State and local governments and private groups, SRS sponsors a comprehensive program of social services, including income and medical support, rehabilitation, job referral, delinquency prevention, child care, and other supportive services, for individuals and families who need and qualify for assistance.

The mission of SRS has its foundation on legislation enacted by the Congress. SRS programs are authorized by the Social Security Act, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, the Older Americans Act, the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act, the Refugee and Migration Assistance Act, the Architectural Barriers to the Handicapped Act, the Mental Retardation Facilities Construction Act and (also in the field of mental retardation) the Public Health Service Act.

Department of State

Agency for International Development.—A.I.D. carries out U.S. overseas programs of economic and technical assistance to less developed countries designed to bring countries to a level of self-sufficiency.

The Office of Nutrition, Technical Assistance Bureau—provides intellectual leadership and technical advice to the other elements of the Agency for International Development in the conduct of nutrition program activities in the developing countries.

It works with the regional bureaus, the Missions and other A.I.D. offices, and with outside entities with the objective of the alleviation of malnutrition in the developing countries.

The key problem areas on which concentrated attention is given by the Office of Nutrition are:

1. Non-availability of highly nutritious food products at low cost to consumers,
2. Difficulty of reaching the pre-school child, particularly in non-urban areas,
3. Lack of motivation by the power structure, and on the part of the consumer.

The American National Red Cross

The American National Red Cross—in accordance with its Federal Charter and its obligation to the people—is committed to: (1) the delivery of essential services to ill and able-bodied members of the armed forces, veterans, and their families, including emergency communications, counseling and necessary financial assistance regardless of cause; (2) the maintenance of a nationwide system of emergency preparedness and collaboration with government and other agencies to deliver emergency and recovery assistance to victims of disasters wherever they occur; (3) actively participate in the international family of the Red Cross by cooperating in disaster relief and the fostering of humanitarian principles and action; (4) the furtherance of the democratic principle of voluntary action to meet human needs; and (5) the expansion of local and national health, education and youth activities to support not only the foregoing services, but also to provide for opportunity to meet the changing needs of people for services within the scope of the Red Cross mission.

The Pan American Health Organization

The Pan American Health Organization, Pan American Sanitary Bureau, has among its many responsibilities that of assisting its 26 member governments in the improvement of the nutritional status of their people. It assigns medical nutritionists, public health nutritionists and dietitians as advisers to national counterparts in the Ministries of Health for the development or strengthening of their nutrition programs and activities.

Advisory services are also given to the 23 Latin American universities developing 4-year degree programs preparing nutritionists-dietitians to work in integrated health services (preventive and medical care) and to Medical Schools and Schools of Public Health for the purpose of strengthening the nutrition content of these curricula. Research activities are promoted and coordinated in such areas as protein calorie malnutrition, nutritional anemias, nutrition and mental development, development of high protein vegetable mixtures, economical and effective measures to prevent endemic goiter, severe vitamin A deficiencies, etc. There are two Nutrition Institutes attached to the Organization: the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama in Guatemala and the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute in Jamaica and Trinidad.

ACTION

ACTION is the new citizen service corps which brought together a number of Federal volunteer programs. These include the Peace Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Foster Grandparents, Service Corps of Retired Executives and the Active Corps of Executives (SCORE/ACE), the Retired Senior Volunteer program (RSVP) and the University Year for ACTION (UYA). ACTION, which began operations July 1, 1971, provides a central mechanism for the recruiting, training and assignment of the full-time volunteers in Peace Corps, VISTA, UYA and for coordinating the part-time volunteers in other programs.

Peace Corps, which celebrated its tenth anniversary last year, is the oldest and largest component of ACTION. There are now about 8,000 Peace Corps Volunteers in 55 developing countries. Many Volunteers are skilled and experienced, reflecting the "New Directions" policy of responding to the changing needs of host countries. VISTA has approximately 4,000 volunteers working to help alleviate poverty within the United States. Foster Grandparents work part-time with children, many of them from institutions, to provide them with the affection and attention they desperately need. SCORE/ACE volunteers advise small businessmen on management problems. RSVP has plans to enlist large numbers of volunteers in putting their experience and knowledge and energy to work on community problems. UYA volunteers work full-time in anti-poverty projects while gaining academic credit from the sponsoring college or university.

II. CONSUMER SPECIALISTS OF THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION²

Consumer Specialists of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are charged with informing and educating the consumer about his protection under Federal laws on matters relating to foods, drugs, cosmetics, household products, and toys, and about the means which the Food and Drug Administration uses to accomplish this protection. Consumer Specialists also assist consumers in the selection, use, and storage of foods, drugs, and medical devices, and when possible, create an awareness of frauds in food and nutrition matters.

Increase of nutrition oriented activities

While food safety is a major concern of the FDA, the agency and its Consumer Specialists have been increasingly active in the area of nutrition. The nutrition and nutri-

² This is one in a series of more comprehensive descriptions of activities of member agencies of the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education. Recent issues of "Nutrition Program News" described the nutrition education activities of the American National Red Cross and the Cooperative Extension Service.

tion education activities of FDA Consumer Specialists are highlighted in this issue of "Nutrition Program News." Activities of specific districts are described; however, they are in general common to all of the FDA Consumer Specialist districts.

Means of consumer contact

The number of Consumer Specialists working with the Food and Drug Administration is small. Therefore, they serve the consumer most effectively by working through other professionals in Federal, State, and local agencies, through educators in home economics, health education, and consumer education, and through the media: television, radio, telephone, and newspapers and other publications.

Professional organizations and contacts.—Consumer Specialists, working with professional organizations, nutritionists, dietitians, home economists, and others, furnish materials, answer questions, and serve as resource people on matters such as nutrition labeling and nutrition guidelines.

Consumer Specialists in the Detroit District have worked closely with the Detroit Dietetic Association, with dietetic interns at a local hospital, and at Consumer Forums with such groups as the United Automobile Workers, public schools, Parent-Teacher Councils, and major universities.

Mailing lists.—Periodically, a summary of FDA's program, regulations, and other pertinent food and nutrition information is mailed to professional groups by the Cincinnati District. The New York District provides key leaders, educators, and the media with information on FDA proposals so that consumers may respond to invitations for comment on these proposals within the time permitted.

Radio.—Consumer Specialists appear frequently on radio programs. One of the most popular and effective methods of getting nutrition information to the public in the Chicago District is 1-minute or 30-second public service announcements. These radio "spots" are prepared and commercially produced as the budget permits. The Consumer Specialists also tape spot announcements and interviews for local stations as they travel through their districts.

Television.—The Consumer Specialist in the New Orleans District has participated in programs on weight reducing facts and fallacies. These programs have been aired on a number of Louisiana and Arkansas stations. Programs on nutrition labeling are scheduled for future production.

Newsletters.—The Chicago District publishes a bi-monthly newsletter in which matters of nutritional concern are included. Consumer questions about nutrition and other topics are answered in the question and answer column of the newsletter.

Pamphlets.—The Food and Drug Administration pamphlet "Nutrition Nonsense" is distributed to university classes, high school assemblies, teachers' workshops, and consumer groups, and through radio and television programs.

Telephone.—Every FDA Consumer Specialist District has a Code-a-phone service with messages originating from FDA headquarters. Consumers receive a recorded message of pertinent and timely information. Nutrition, being a popular subject at this time, has high priority as a subject for these phone messages. In some areas, messages are recorded in both English and Spanish.

Conferences and workshops

Consumer Specialists participate in the planning and implementation of nutrition related conferences, workshops, and in-service training programs. The Baltimore District Consumer Specialist participates in in-service workshops for health educators, home economists, nurses, home-health aides, medical technicians, nursing home administrators, Head Start instructors, and others. The Consumer Specialist in Cincinnati is involved in conferences and workshops with health departments, Boards of Education, public health nutritionists, dietitians, nurses, and women's clubs.

The New Orleans District Consumer Specialist has held conferences on food buying to discuss ways of obtaining a balanced diet on low income.

The two Consumer Specialists covering New York State are involved in planning and implementing a series of 11 Regional Nutrition Education Conferences. The Conferences, sponsored by the New York State Department of Education, are being held throughout the State in the spring of 1972.

"Maxi Food—Mini Money" Nutrition and Food Buying Workshop

Because of the high unemployment rate in Seattle and other parts of the State of Washington, State Department of Public Assistance caseworkers were counseling an increasing number of persons with food buying and nutrition problems. The Department requested an in-service training workshop on how to buy maximum nutrition at the lowest cost. The FDA Consumer Specialist, the Nutrition Consultant from the Division of Health, State Department of Social and Health Services, and the Nutrition Specialist from the Washington State Extension Service organized the 1-day workshop.

Participants in the workshops included representatives of the County Extension Office, the County Health District, the local Office of Public Assistance, Extension Service Nutrition Aides, the State Division of Health, the State Dairy Council, the State Extension Service, and the Food and Drug Administration.

The objective of the workshop was "to provide nutrition information to the workshop participant that will aid him in counseling low income groups." The program of the workshop was devoted to a consideration of consumer needs and problems: "The Consumer Speaks," discussions of "Food for the Whole Family," and "More for the Dollar: Dairy Foods, Meat and Meat Substitutes, Fruits and Vegetables, Breads and Cereals." Means of getting the information to the consumer were discussed in "Taking Steps in Counseling" and "The Work We Do." The workshop has been presented in 12 areas of the State to more than 375 caseworkers, public health nurses, Extension aides, homemaker aides, outreach workers, and other community workers.

Combatting misinformation

The FDA fights quackery and misinformation regarding food items because it is a violation of Federal laws to deceive consumers with false claims for these items.

Food faddism.—Consumers are exposed to much nutrition information in the popular press. It is difficult for consumers to distinguish between valid and invalid information. The FDA publications, "Food Nonsense and Sense" and "Questions and Answers about Food Supplements," are widely distributed in order to help counteract the current food faddism trends. The Consumer Specialist in the Kansas City Region tells groups that the public's increased interest in nutrition and nutrition information has aided the spread of food faddism.

Organic foods.—Organic foods and health foods are frequent topics in speeches made by the Baltimore District Consumer Specialist when she addresses adult education classes in community colleges and local libraries. Older people are reminded by the Kansas City Regional Office Consumer Specialist that with the possible exception of iron for older American girls and women, the nutrient requirements of the American public can be met by the ordinary food supplies available and that "natural vitamins, yoghurt, wheat germ, alfalfa tea, and carrot juice" are not necessary for maintenance of good nutrition.

Weight reduction.—Numerous workshops have been held in the Kansas City Region to provide nutritional information for weight watchers in order to help prevent their purchase of deceptive products and devices.

Nutrition labeling

The current testing of several types of nutrition labeling by the Food and Drug Administration is evidence of in-

creased interest in more nutrition information for the consumer. Consumer Specialists are keeping the public informed on the nutrition labeling program through the news media, through presentation to consumer and educational groups, and through consumer phone messages.

The Detroit District Consumer Specialist has conducted nutrition education activities designed to determine the best means of communicating nutrition information on labels and in nutrition guidelines.

Consumer reaction to different types of nutrition labeling accompanied by an educational program, was tested in the Minneapolis District. A special presentation on food labeling and buying was also given in that area for workers in emergency food programs.

Influences on educational curriculum

The Minneapolis District Consumer Specialist is working with the Minnesota Nutrition Council to develop a nutrition education program for elementary teachers. The Consumer Specialist in Kansas is active, as a member of the Kansas Interagency Nutrition Committee, in efforts to have a nutrition course included in the curriculum for teachers in Kansas.

Participation in in-service consumer education courses for teachers gives the Consumer Specialist in the Baltimore District an opportunity to emphasize FDA's position on food additives and on nutrition and ingredient labeling. She also serves as a consultant for curriculum development in State health education programs for grades kindergarten through 12.

CONCLUSION

Seek the help of Consumer Specialists

The role of the Consumer Specialists in the fields of nutrition and nutrition education is felt in many areas of public concern and interest. Consumer Specialists work with a great variety of organizations, individuals, and media. They are interested in efforts to inform the consumer on matters related to the safety, purity, wholesomeness, and nutrition of the food he eats.

Every part of the United States is served by a Food and Drug Administration Consumer Specialist. Readers who are interested in their services are encouraged to contact their District Consumer Specialist (see insert for names and addresses) and elicit her professional advice, aid, or cooperation in matters concerning the food and nutrition of local consumers.